

Sports

Tolliver presents challenge to struggling Aggie defense

By Doug Walker
Assistant Sports Editor

The Texas A&M defense faces another stiff test Saturday against the Texas Tech Red Raiders.

At his weekly press conference Tuesday Sherrill heaped praise on the Raiders and said he was wary of senior quarterback Billy Joe Tolliver, who passed for 272 yards against the Aggies in last year's upset Tech win in Lubbock.

"He's a legitimate quarterback," Sherrill said. "He'll go on to the next level (pro football). He's got a gun on him."

Tolliver is the leader of an offense that is tenth in the current NCAA statistics in passing offense, averaging 283 yards per game.

Tolliver has completed slightly over 50 percent of his passes this season for 845 yards and seven touchdowns while tossing only two interceptions.

He ranks seventh in the nation in passing and has led the Tech offense to an average of 412 yards per game while utilizing several gifted performers at the skill positions.

The ability of the Raiders to use the draw play effectively while using the screen pass to neutralize the pass rush played a large role in last year's upset and has Sherrill concerned.

"They have the style of offense that gives us problems," Sherrill said. "A team that does both (pass and run) will give any team problems."

"We need the offense and the kicking team to keep us in the game so we can be reckless on defense."

Like Oklahoma State last week, the Raiders have outstanding receivers and versatile running backs.

The receiving corps, rated the best in the country by *The Sporting News*, is led by senior wingback Wayne Walker and senior

Moon steroid suspension questionable, says Sherrill

By Hal L. Hammons
Sports Editor

Texas A&M Head Coach Jackie Sherrill defended offensive lineman L.B. Moon Tuesday, who tested positive in a Southwest Conference test for steroids and has been suspended for the next three Aggie games.

"He's never tested positive for us," Sherrill said.

"He was tested two weeks before by us, and he turned up negative," Sherrill said.

Moon said he did not plan on appealing the decision, although he did say he thought he had a good case.

"After finding out I had tested positive I tested again, and it turned up negative," Moon said.

Moon said the team's situation is the main reason he is not considering an appeal.

split end Eddy Anderson. Walker opened the game against North Texas by turning a screen pass into a 73-yard touchdown.

"It looks they're a better screen team than they were last year," Sherrill said. "Tech has a lot of speed and a lot of offensive weapons."

Reserve senior wingback Tyrone Thurman is a threat to score to score any time he touches the football. Thurman opened the scoring with a 74-yard punt return in last year's game with the Aggies.

The performance of Ervin Farris, the Raiders' senior fullback, could be a good gauge of the effectiveness of the Aggie defense in stopping the Tech offense.

Farris earned Southwest Conference player of the week hon-

"We're 0-3," he said. "We're not going to go to the Cotton Bowl. With all these problems, I'm not going to fight it."

"We don't need more distractions. We're trying to bring things together as a team."

Moon said he harbored no grudges against the conference.

"The Southwest Conference has been fair with me," he said. "They listened to me. I think they bend over backward to help players."

Sherrill said players are tested for drugs by the team four times per year, and have been for the past two years. Before that they were tested two or three times a year.

The 6-6, 270-pound senior has started all season at left offensive tackle. He was named the A&M Offensive Player of the Game by the Aggie coaches after the Kick-off Classic loss to Nebraska.

ors after last year's game by catching six passes for 98 yards against A&M.

His effectiveness kept the blitzing Aggies on their heels and created opportunities for the Tech offense.

The A&M defense ranks fourth in the SWC in total defense allowing 338.3 yards per game and is second in pass defense.

He also hopes the home crowd will help the Aggies rebound from a tough opening three games.

"It will mean a lot to our players to play in front of our home crowd for a change," Sherrill said. "Our season really starts now. There are different stages of the season and this is an important stage right now."

Still made of stone Matson recalls '64, '68 Olympics

By Jerry Bolz
Sports Writer

Meeting Randy Matson at his office in the new Association of Former Students building is like running in to one of the giant marble pillars out front.

Like a pillar, Matson is steady. At 6-6 and 240 pounds, he looks like he could have pitched the 16-pound shot in Seoul as well as he did in the 1964 and 1968 Olympics.

Since the 1968 games in Mexico City — where Matson won a gold medal — politics, violence and drugs have drastically taken away from the pure Olympic spirit of competition. There is so much drug use today, it's hard to tell if one athlete is better than another or just on drugs, Matson says.

As the executive director of A&M's Association of Former Students, Matson doesn't spend much

Profile of the Week
Randy Matson

be excited, even if it was just me there."

His work paid off. It and the experience of an Eastern European tournament prior to the games opened the door for the 19-year-old Matson to take the silver medal in the shot at Tokyo.

Matson's relationships with Olympic teammates was friendly, but not overly. Friendships were put lower than the quest for gold. Competition against teammates was just as vigorous as against a guy from somewhere else, he said.

Both U.S. teams Matson was on were out for precious metal more than to see their country reign.

"We all wanted the Americans to do well, but we would have rather finished first than third in a 1-2-3 U.S. win," he said.

Being best in the world wasn't too See Matson, page 13

time tuning in to the world of sports anymore. But the former shot put world-record holder had his share and then some in the 1960s.

Coming in to Aggieland as a rather big fish at about 6-6 and 215 pounds in 1963, the thought of going to Tokyo to represent the U.S. was only a thought in the back of Matson's mind. But as he added 50 pounds his chances and hope grew too.

At A&M, Matson was known for his steadfast training. Many weeks, he would be out all seven days, whether anyone else was or not.

"I enjoyed being out by myself," he said. "I'd put a towel out and try to throw over it. If I made it, I would

The cream of Texas football appears non-SWC in nature

Now that the NCAA has scooped the dross of the top of Texas football, the pure substance left looks kind of orange and green.

Don't shudder yet, the Longhorns and Bears are already showing their inconsistencies.

The orange of the future is Texas-El Paso and the green is University of North Texas. Not-so-gradually these two teams have shedded their mediocre to abhorable ways and risen to the top of an otherwise stale market.

True, there are glimpses of possible quality play in the SWC with TCU, Arkansas and Houston, but time will show if they are for real. Otherwise, the SWC is a model of inconsistency — that is, with the exceptions of Rice and the Aggies.

Although some would say that UTEP is in New Mexico or even south of the border, we better claim



Jerry Bolz
Sports viewpoint

them for Texas while we can. The Miners were 7-4 last year, their first winning season in years, and could have whipped many bowl teams.

This year UTEP is off to a running 3-1 start. Their only loss was by a few points to Brigham Young on the same field the old orange Longhorns were beat 47-6 a week before.

Saturday, the Miners edged out Tulsa in Oklahoma. Who's Tulsa, right? They're the team that nearly handed Arkansas a loss a few weeks ago.

The Miners are definitely not taking it easy by belonging to the Western Athletic Conference, either. Today's WAC is not the BYU-dominated league it was five years ago. Teams like Air Force, Wyoming and San Diego State are making a race out of the WAC every year, as well as giving the rest of the country fits — SWC included.

Truthfully, I think if El Paso was offered a spot in the SWC, they would stick in the WAC. Pastures are definitely getting greener out in the desert.

Turning to green, recently renamed University of North Texas Eagles — or Mean Green, as they like to

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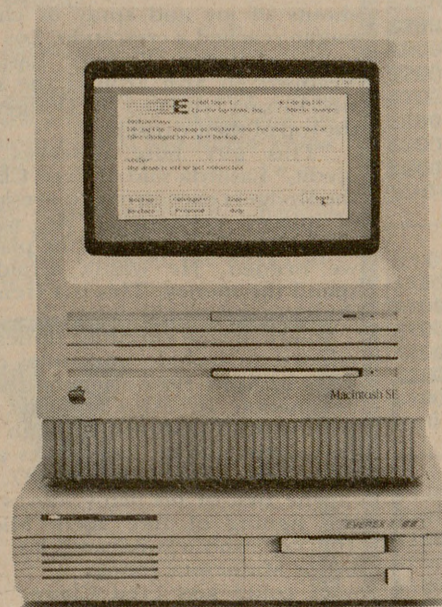
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